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Childhood Education

GROUPING

*Basis for grouping practices
through the school and in
the classroom*

October 1953

JOURNAL OF THE
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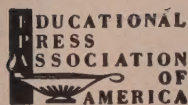
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*To Stimulate Thinking
Rather Than
Advocate Fixed Practice*
1953-54: Learning At Its
Best

Childhood Education

Number 2

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Children can learn to work together.

Courtesy, Chicago Public Schools

Choice-Points in Working Groups

IF YOU WANT TO TEACH CHILDREN THAT COMMITTEES DON'T WORK—leave their committee work unevaluated, and the difficulties they have encountered unexplained! Unless children are helped to understand the process and problems associated with it, committee work can lead to bad social learnings. Committee work, of itself, is not necessarily a good thing.

But working in groups is the only way in which children can learn how to work together—the fundamental skill in a modern society. It

is also the hardest and most complex of skills, one that children do not learn by themselves. Children do not normally experiment with group problem-solving. They scarcely know that there is such a thing, unless they are shown.

Recent work on cooperative planning suggests some points along the way at which classroom committees may fail, either disintegrating or falling under the domination of one person who "takes hold." These are *choice-points*, and a correct choice at these points is a life-or-death matter for the cooperating group.

- The first of these is achieving agreement by all the children on what the job is. For example, if the assignment is "to report on Uruguay," it is necessary that each child agree to some definition of exactly what this means. Does it mean a routine products-and-topography report? Does it mean a day in the life of a child in Montevideo? Whatever it means, all the children must perceive it the same way. Insuring this agreement is complicated; the teacher will have to help.

- The second is the development of a step-wise plan. The group, having agreed on what is to be done, must analyze the job and divide responsibility appropriate to the abilities and interests of each child. Interim deadlines must be set. The teacher should help here, too.

- The third is the development of a plan for meeting unexpected difficulties. Someone in the group will catch a cold. Someone else will fail to do his part. Someone else won't be able to find any material on his topic. The group will fall apart unless its members understand the necessity for re-planning. The childish thing to do is to say, "We've made a plan; we have to stick to it." The more mature approach is to re-plan, with the new difficulty taken into account.

- Fourth, the children must agree on what will be an acceptable product. Failure to do this may leave them scornful of one another's work and thus of the committee approach.

The penalty for failure to help children at crucial points in classroom committee work is mischievous social learning and primitive social situations. *All* the social attitudes resulting from unguided situations are "caught not taught;" if we will help children to recognize these crucial points, we can hope that at least some of the social learnings that arise from classroom group work will be guided, not merely "caught."

MUCH OF THE TEACHER'S HELP SHOULD TAKE THE FORM OF HELPING children to recognize these and other choice-points. Much of this help has to be offered on the spot; some of it can be offered in evaluation discussions of the progress of the classroom working groups. The big point is that the help must be offered, and the evaluations made and acted on. The alternative, too often, is chaotic misunderstanding by the children of the nature and potentialities of classroom group work.—ARTHUR W. FOSHAY, *director, Bureau of Educational Research, Ohio State University, Columbus.*

What *Groups* Do for Children

According to Webster, "group" is a noun denoting an assemblage of people; but in our educational jargon it has a more active meaning as a technique used for better learning situations. Etta Rose Bailey, principal, Maury School, Richmond, Virginia, here defines group in its fullness of meaning.

THE "GROUP," AS HERE CONSIDERED, must be thought of as an achievement in interpersonal relationships arrived at as boys and girls tie themselves into on-going, mutually shared experiences. "Group" has to do with an all-encompassing condition forged by individuals creating their own experience here and now. It must be conceded that every classroom group in our schools cannot be called a "group" as here defined.

The group takes on some of the characteristics of a living, growing organism. It is continuously undergoing change and modification. The greater the variety and spread of individual talents and skills brought into play as group experiences emerge, the more certain and worthy the effect upon the group. Full and free interplay of individuals creates an environment which "sticks out" with challenges to individuals. Out of this condition, group overtones develop—overtones prompting expression in the direction of friendliness or alertness or curiosity, or any other human characteristic. Group values or standards strongly influence the molding of the individual's own values.

The group "pull" helps a child untangle confusion regarding the rightness or wrongness of his own behavior. It helps each individual see himself as he really is. An eleven-year-old boy, Ronald, on entering school in a new

neighborhood, had several days of somewhat restrained response to all group activities. He began one morning enthusiastically to report an adventure where he and his friends had accumulated sufficient rocks to "break every single window in a house." As the tale was unraveling, individuals intermittently came in with, "Did anybody live in that house?" "Were they getting ready to tear the house down?" "Whose house was it?" To each question Ronald replied with a quick "Yes" or "No" and resumed the tale. Then came Steve's question, "Did you ask if you could do it?" At this point, Ronald paused for a long second, looking seriously at Steve before he replied, "An old man . . . I think he was the caretaker, was sitting under a tree. He told us we could." Ronald's words, his posture, his expression registered the unmistakable conclusion that well-fixed values had been challenged.


An individual's response to the group "pull" may be immediate and verbal and clear. It may be understandable and measurable. It may be delayed and slowly observable. It is always certain.

Just as certainly as the group does influence the individual, so do the expressions of individual members shape the character of the group. A class of seven-year-olds over a period of time had been having fun with puppets. Because of lack of experience there were many short-

comings in the performances, breaks in dialogue, and the stage settings broke continuity. As the performers worked with the problems the audience interrupted with comments, questions, and suggestions. One day, Mary, who had been busily at work for several days on a new kind of stage, invited her friends to see her show. A hush fell over the audience. Interruptions and suggestions gave place to intense silence. As the curtain was drawn, individuals said to one another, "That was good." There is no question but that this group's standards in puppetry were lifted by Mary's performance.

Sometimes adults, often classroom teachers, have the rare privilege of membership in children's groups *where real group life* is expanding. Such a relationship gives them opportunities to facili-

tate the play of person on person as boys and girls create their own experiences. They may influence emerging values as an individual's expression, playing upon that of others, forges out the concept, "This is right and we accept it because it's right even though we lose some fun." They may, by encouraging the expression of many and varied talents, help boys and girls create an environment in which they easily recognize the varying strengths of each and accept the weakness of all. Only in such an environment, guided by the wise counsel of an understanding adult, can democracy nurture the growth of leaders who understand those whom they lead. Only in such an atmosphere can followers learn the value of true leadership. Only by this process may the potential powers of all be released for the good of all.



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Grouping in the Whole School

Here is an article to stimulate thinking about traditional grade grouping practices. Are we utilizing what we know about children in following them? Jeannette Veatch, Elementary Education Department, New York University, New York, projects some ideas for consideration. Don't miss the following articles from schools which are trying some other grouping practices.

LET US LOOK FOR A MOMENT AT GRADE levels in a whole school system. Inside a schoolroom a teacher usually has flexibility in shifting and changing groups as necessity seems to dictate. But because grade levels affect everyone concerned in a given building, and because much more planning is needed for a change of greater scope, we find less examination and concern regarding the values of grade grouping than any other portion of this problem of school arrangements of human beings.

Let us dream a bit of a school where grade levels have been changed from one year shifts, or "passes," to four year shifts. Heresy? Perhaps. But what would be the gains? What would be lost? What would it mean for teachers to live with children without marking them or passing them once or twice a year? What would it mean for children? Is such a plan worthy of the trouble any significant reorganization causes? Let us see.

Imagine a school where there are no restrictions on children about which teacher they may or may not work with. Visualize a team of four teachers placed together for a four-year period in charge of 100 children whose total age range is four years, either in the lower or upper elementary levels.

Or imagine another school whose entire population from kindergarten

through sixth grade is 200 children. Could we dream of that school with eight teachers, each one working with children whose ages span seven years? Is such a thing possible? Is such a thing valuable? Is it worth our consideration? I think so.

First, it would seem that varied age groupings would show that children in them were more integrative, more cooperative, and less segregative in character; second, that subject matter arising from authoritarianisms of the past could at last be ignored; and third, that children's interests would truly come into their own with the richness of individual difference being used to advantage instead of as a chore.

What Values Would There Be?

Let us analyze these points to see if strength is to be found, and if found, how can it be used?

In play groupings in a neighborhood we are as likely to find a six-year-old playing with a four- and an eight-year-old as we are to find them playing with another six. In adult life, there is rarely a situation which demands that *all* participants be exactly in the same year of age. With these heterogeneous groupings so common in out-of-school life, can we not question the value of putting all of the sixes, or eights, or elevens together?

If the ages were all mixed up, would we not be providing a situation that permits better integration between all? An individual cannot change his race at will, nor can he change his *age* at will.

More pertinent, perhaps, may be the question of *assignment* of children to their age level groups. Children must, by law, go to school. But must they go to school with those who, for no other reason than similarity of age, are in the same group? By so doing do we tend to make cooperation between children nonsimultaneous, coercive, or forced? The practice of cooperation is a delicate matter. As one child said, "Cooperate means to do what teacher says." But in a shifting, fluid, interest-centered kind of grouping, cooperation becomes a necessity of living. When necessity of cooperation moves from the teacher to the child, it becomes a valid part of school learning.

In these ways we feel that integration and cooperation have a more natural setting than in the usual grade-leveled school.

Authoritarianism, in the past, stemmed from three main authorities: the church, the king, and the father in the family. The development of America was and is essentially an escape from an authority figure. Freedom of religion, elections, and the elevation of the status of women bear witness to this. But authoritarianism, historically, required a body of subject matter to be taught that guaranteed its continuing. Teachers became reflections of, or imitations of, the authority figures.

Teachers, as did father, knew best what was to be learned. Subject matter, developed before a child was born, ignored what he was like after birth. Children needed to have the sin and iniquity *trained out* of them, or at least repressed so that it didn't show. This subject matter, growing in width and

breadth as the years passed, had to somehow be fitted to the numbers of people who wanted education. One of the major ways of accomplishing this was to slice up the subject matter in suitable slices. Then children were assigned to the slices, and it is only in recent years that questions are being raised about this practice.

Teachers who are wedded to subject matter slices have greater difficulty being interested in children. Recognition of the authoritarian base of such a concept can help to free such teachers from the strait jacket of their "subject." In other words, if an individual teacher does not feel he has to cover a given amount of material in a given amount of time, such a teacher has a mind set to become more interested in children. If the administration apportions children of such variety that subject matter slices can in no way be fitted to their needs and maturities, teachers are released from subject matter pressures. The past, for itself alone, can be ignored, and used, as it properly should be, in the light of needs of children of the present.

*We know that curriculum demands the interests of children for its vitality. If children learn only what they will to learn, the whole argument supporting the need to seek children's interests is weakened by the existence of the usual patterns of grade-level groups. For example, let us suppose that children became concerned with a functional problem of good nutrition. If the group's ages range from 6 through 13, interests must be found for every child, no matter what his age, and the richness of contribution of these varied ages can well be imagined. If, on the other hand, the group's ages ranged from 7/1 to 7/11, the similarity of interests *and* abilities *would* limit the depth of group contribution. It is not that the end product is overweeningly important, but what is*

important is the richness of the living on the way.

In rural schools, one place in which we find varied age groups, the artist teacher can and has produced miracles of learning undreamed of in an age-grade set up. We have much to learn by studying situations such as these.

From another point of view, we have all heard children who scorn their younger compatriots by saying, "That's baby stuff!" We suspect that in too many schools it is somehow "better" to be in the sixth grade than in the second. Human relations facts about the way

cliques and gangs are formed, or ghettos are made, give us pause when we see, even if in miniature, the same poor human relations practices in schools. The acceptance of differences as neither superior nor inferior is coming to this society but slowly, and it would seem that educators could give it a harder push.

For this reason and all those that precede, we submit that the practices of age grouping on grade levels should be scrutinized with a more suspicious eye than in the past. All credit must be given to those communities which are experimenting in this direction.

Schools Can Change Grouping Practices

Several schools are trying some different grouping practices. We queried those of which we had heard as to what they were doing and why. Let us hear from you if your school has done some experimenting.

Richmond, Virginia

Throughout the city of Richmond, children enter school at five years of age. The grouping program provides that they normally have an uninterrupted period with the same teacher covering two years. The plan is called "Junior-Primary." The grouping is flexible and adjustments are made when necessary—such as for those children requiring more or less time.

The program began in 1936 because teachers were aware of gaps that existed in the program of education for young children. It was begun in a series of experiments in a continuous ungraded program for the beginning years of school.

What next? In order to reduce difficulties faced by children after their

Junior-Primary experience, experiments are being carried on with the second- and third-grade level. In several spots children entering second grade remain with one teacher for two years until the end of third grade. At that time, in certain cases, adjustments are made whereby the child will remain in the primary department for another semester or a year if it appears that he will profit from the experience. He does not repeat former work, but continues to make progress at his own rate. Then he moves into the upper elementary.

During 1952-53 four such experiments were conducted. Teachers expressed complete satisfaction with the plan and the child growth achieved. They felt there were these values involved:

- Knew all the children better, therefore individual as well as group needs were met.
- Emotional problems were at a min-

The information for this report was supplied by Erma Bennett and Naoma Rowan, Wasatch School, Provo, Utah; Florence Kelly, Milwaukee, Wis.; Ruby Schuyler, Glencoe, Ill.; and Willie B. Segar, Richmond, Va.

imum in these experimental groups.

- There were practically no discipline problems and the attendance problem was "licked."

- There was greater interest on the part of children.

- Teachers met more parents at school and in the home.

- Achievement test results were surprisingly good—above average.

- Each child made satisfactory progress for him.

- Parents were elated.

Wasatch School, Provo, Utah

Four years ago the faculty and children of Wasatch School came together in a new building of which five rooms were completed. It seemed a good time to give less thought to grade lines and more to other reasons behind grouping. Some things considered were:

- equalizing the teacher load.
- capitalizing on children's natural tendency to learn from each other.
- structuring situations where children could more easily (and without stigma) find their own best working level.

- maintaining a partially stable group from year to year by having a small group of older children who would move on, another group who would remain in the same room and with the same teacher if possible, and a small younger group who would come in new each year.

- providing more consistent effort for continuous growth.

- working toward the development of leadership and followership qualities in children.

Considering these things the children in the first, second, and third grade span were placed at random in each of four classrooms.

As teachers learned more about the



Courtesy, Los Alamos, New Mexico, Public Schools

Children learn from each other.

children and problems in connection with random grouping, they began to consider more carefully the placement of each individual child. These points were considered:

- cultivating desirable friendships for children.

- reducing the number of reading groups for teachers.

- considering preferences and desires expressed by parents when possible.

- helping children to accept differences between themselves and others in a situation where they were expected to be different.

—achieving a balance between ages, sexes, and abilities.

The problem of promotion and the emotional tension sometimes connected with it was not faced until at the end of three years in the Wasatch School. If before that time a child had become ready to work in a fourth-grade group, he moved into it with friends already made in the Primary Unit—after parents, principal, and teacher were satisfied that the “whole child” was ready to move on.

If at the end of three years it seemed advisable for certain children to take another year of work, the child remained with friends already cultivated (and usually preferred)—and after parents, principal, and teacher agreed that such a situation could be achieved without damage to the child’s personality and self-respect. Upon occasion, the child himself suggested that he would rather stay.

Problems encountered and met. Problems centered in these areas: (a) how to fit learning groups into a workable daily schedule, (b) how to give more challenge to older children in the group, (c) how to keep younger children comfortable in the group, and (d) how to keep parents informed and happy with children’s progress.

At the conclusion of four years the Wasatch School was completed and could accommodate children up to and including sixth grade. During the last year a study group composed of about 20 parents, the PTA president, four teachers, the principal, and the district supervisor met once a week to study or consider ways of resolving problems that had become apparent to parents or teachers.

This study group reviewed the literature, sent out questionnaires, brought in experts for informal discussion periods, and in many ways attempted to find

methods of improving the school program.

The group, at the close of their study, recommended maintaining flexibility but at the same time narrowing the age span. In the Fall of 1953 grouping will be of two grade levels with overlappings at either end. Children in grades one and two may be together, children in grades two and three may be together. Grades three and four and also four and five may be together, but the sixth grade will work alone.

Attention will be given to the number of learning groups a teacher has within his group. Attention will be given to the kind of role a child should have opportunity for (i.e. role of leader or the role of a follower). Attention will be given to the readiness of individual children for different kinds of academic learnings and to their social needs.

Glencoe, Illinois

The grades from first through fifth in all the schools in Glencoe are involved in a flexible grouping program. The experiment was begun five years ago to eliminate fixed grade ideas in parents and teachers and to equalize groups—to improve pupil-teacher ratio and to make smaller groups.

Teachers saw the need for more flexible grouping and participated in planning and evaluating all the way along.

Glencoe finds their plan a better way to help new teachers meet individual differences of children. During the summer inservice program (Glencoe has a twelve-month plan for teachers) teachers may learn about the program.

Grades are combined to suit the needs of the children involved. While combinations are in terms of first and second grade, second and third grade, third and fourth grade, fourth and fifth, an effort has been made to think of the

groups in terms of age levels such as the six and seven year olds. Two groups combined a three year span such as seven, eight, and nine's, and the eight, nine, and ten's.

The assignment of children to the group in which they will work is done by considering many factors—the nature and number of groups varies according to the enrollment and needs of the children. Taken into consideration are physical size and growth, emotional and social development, mental development, and interests. The planning for assignment takes place in the Spring as the teachers who are involved through having had the children or in planning to receive them sit down with the principal and discuss placement. The aim is to place children where they can work and play most effectively.

Parents have helped in the planning and have been kept informed from the beginning of the program. One device which has helped is the keeping of charts to show the statistical data on the growth of the children in all areas in the so-called intergrade groups and in straight grade groups. The discussion of individual differences in a variety of ways has helped parents to see that in any group of children there are wide differences in ability and growth.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Recognizing that a child's learning program should be continuous, especially in the years when early and continued success is basic and important, Milwaukee began in 1942 to experiment with the ungraded primary school.

Now in 82 of the 87 elementary schools, children in first, second, and third grade are organized in what is called the "Primary School" plan. Children of similar chronological age, emotional and social maturity are kept to-

gether when administratively possible through six semesters above the kindergarten.

During this time learning and social progress are observed and recorded. If retardation appears, indicating that some child may need seven or eight semesters before he is ready for the traditional fourth grade, his program may be stretched out. No child is ever asked to repeat but is helped to adjust his learning to his own slower growth pattern. Regrouping at end of semester may occur and helps retarded and accelerated youngsters. It takes place gradually and may occur at any time during the three or four year period. Serious retardation is detected early, and proper diagnosis and adjustments are made.

The bright child is rarely accelerated more than one semester. He is kept near his own group and given enriching experiences to preserve his intellectual growth and social stability.

The Primary School was carried on in the Maryland Avenue School for three years before any other school was encouraged to change the traditional grade plan. During that time the plan was carefully studied and analyzed so that succeeding schools benefited from the experience.

How it works. Within a beginning group the teacher soon becomes aware of various maturation levels and growth patterns and realizes he must adapt the handling of these children to their special needs and provide proper developmental experiences. With proper guidance many children who otherwise would have been repeaters made satisfactory adjustment to their group. No amount of pressure beyond a child's ability will develop desirable learnings, attitudes, and habits.

When competing with his own ability, the child has a feeling of satisfaction

and achievement rather than one of frustration because of a so-called poor performance. Such a child is not marked "failure" but at the proper time is checked seventh or eighth semester on his report card. He and his parents know he needs more time to complete the primary program. On this level he can meet the situation with better understanding than at an earlier period.

At times it becomes necessary for a child to be transferred from an ungraded primary to a traditional grade situation. Milwaukee operates on the semester plan. When a child is checked P3 (Primary School, third semester) and his academic and social progress are considered adequate, the teacher writes on the transfer card "second grade B" as the new placement.

If a child is a slow learner and has evidenced academic retardation and social immaturity, his Primary School report may read P3. In order to keep his program adjusted to his learning pattern, the transfer card will identify him as "First grade A."

When children are transferred into Ungraded Primary from a traditional system operating on yearly organization, a second grader if transferred in the Fall would be called P3; if transferred in Spring semester would be called P4.

When a child has finished Ungraded Primary and is ready for fourth grade he is promoted to that grade. The word "promotion" is not used prior to that time.

They found it helpful. When initiating the program it was wise to start with a group of children leaving kindergarten and progress with it for six or more semesters. Each succeeding group became "first semester above the kindergarten," then progressed to second semester and so on. Since these children had never been graded, it was easy for

them to fall into the ungraded semester pattern.

Door cards for classroom identification are labeled, "Primary School, Miss . . ." Whenever administration permits, one teacher keeps his group for an entire year, though it may seem advisable to shift some children for social and academic reasons at the end of a semester.

Summary

Two questions asked of these schools were concerned with problems encountered and parent, teacher, and child readiness for the program changes.

The replies were similar and showed that problems were being attacked. For instance, securing parent and teacher cooperation in the project continues even after the program has been established since there is a constant turnover of teachers and of new parents to the community (or new to the school). Workshops, inservice groups, extension courses, the development of handbooks, and individual help were all given as ways of promoting the program. PTA, mothers' clubs, and pre-registration were ways in which parents got acquainted with the program. Two schools stressed the actual involvement of parents in the planning procedure.

There were problems which are evident under school conditions of any kind. These included teachers not trained in elementary education, large teacher turnover, very large elementary schools, part-time situations due to crowded buildings, too wide learning range in one classroom.

Three points seem to be the key to successfully undertaking change of grouping practices throughout the school—parent, teacher, and child readiness; cooperative planning by all concerned; making progress slowly with the group involved making the request for it.

Grouping in the Classroom

What should we know about grouping? On what basis are groups formed? When does the whole group function? Edith M. Thomas writes from her experience as principal in the Baltimore, Maryland, Public Schools.

IF WE BELIEVE THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES in children and that each child possesses his own individual personality, then we must provide the most carefully worked out plan for his maximum growth and development. We must prepare the right atmosphere conducive to that growth; we must give every incentive to encourage the growth of the child.

The traditional school of long ago did not make allowance for individual differences. There was little, if any, stimulation of growth for the bright child, gifted child, or the retarded child.

Today we know that modern society demands and challenges the school to develop the child to meet and cope intelligently with the complexities of life in which he finds himself. This development must take into consideration the whole child, his physical, mental, social, emotional, and moral self. In order to care for these characteristics, the curriculum must be so organized and the program so geared as to recognize the individuality of each child and to promote his total growth and development.

The schoolroom should exemplify the situations in life which the child is to confront as an adult. The program must have for its goal the optimum development of the total child and must take into consideration the biological aspect of each child, his physical and mental potentialities, the cultural pattern of the

race that he confronts daily, the environmental influences under which he thrives, and how each of these plays its part in the growth pattern of the child.

The classroom program must provide opportunity for optimum growth and development of each type of child according to his ability and capacity for learning—the above average learner, the average learner, and the slower learner. Why force all children together into a “mold” of subject matter and proceed with a program which sees who jumps out of the bag first?

How Shall We Group Them?

Children are grouped upon whatever basis is most practical at a given time or upon what is their need or interest. The grouping should be flexible. Grouping should not be static but should be a “shifting” process as the needs, interests, and capabilities of the children vary and are met. Maturation levels, social levels, behavior levels, friendship problems, capability and incapability, all have a potent emphasis on grouping for reading as for any other area of the curriculum.

As the child's needs are met, he moves from one group to another. The grouping will vary with the total plan set up by the pupils and teacher. Small groups, groups within groups, as well as individual pupil groups will be formed out of the whole group in the schoolroom. Each grouping will be based on the activity involved with its particular problem to be solved, its own interests and needs, and its own selection of duty to be performed. Each group will work

under the guidance of the teacher. There will be *skill groups* in which a particular skill is being stressed, learned, and practiced upon—help being given in the skill until the need is met. There will be *study groups* in which pupils are gathering information through the use of varied type references to solve a problem. There will be *experimental groups* in which pupils are experimenting with materials or substances to solve or prove a theory. There will be *interest groups* in which pupils are working on common interests. There will be *groups of few children* where one child from another group will help the children (the children in the group make the selection of the child they wish to help them). There will be the *teams*, groups of children who need further practice on a skill.

Groups Were Needed

During the winter, Mrs. R's second grade, in preparation for a visit to the Shrine Circus, decided to make circus animals. The children had to first have an informative background. The entire class was vitally interested in knowing about animals from stories read by the teacher. Their interest and curiosity were aroused and they wanted to read about animals, too.

John wanted to know why you can't hear the lion walk. Mary wanted to know how the zebra got its stripes. Joe wanted to know how his pet turtle could go in and out of its shell.

The class divided itself into varied groups. Each group had a specific duty to perform in accordance with its reading ability. The teacher moved from group to group, working with one group in particular in which children were finding facts. The teacher also worked with Donald who was very slow in reading. Donald told about his puppy. The teacher recorded the sentences on the

blackboard and later wrote them on the chart story paper, at the top of which Donald drew a picture of his puppy. Donald learned to read the story for himself and later enjoyed reading the story to the class. He had not been left to become discouraged because he could not read the book used in either group.

How Shall We Label Groups?

The teacher must be a resourceful person. He certainly should know the why of the group pattern which evolves from the total group. However, he must not in any way indicate the strength of one group over the weakness of another as to cause embarrassment to its participants. There should be no indicating "sign posts" as x, y, z, or 1, 2, 3, to cause disparagement of the group or an individual. If a name is given the group, let it be known by the name of one of its members or the name may be taken from seasonal features or from story characters.

Grouping children and encouraging them to group themselves makes for wholesome living and development. It is a true life situation in which they find themselves at work or play. It enriches their experiences; it develops in them self-respect and mutual respect for the contributions of each other; it gives assurance to the slower learners in that their contributions and their services in the group are recognized and appreciated by their fellow associates. It is an estimable stepping stone in developing in children through cooperative group living the invaluable trait of social living.

In our daily lives we are parts of many groups, some small, some large. The whole group is the starting point, so all groups are brought together for discussion, evaluation, classification, and summarization of the activity in its entirety. The entire class may choose to



Courtesy, Indiana State Teachers College, Terre Haute

Grouping is one of the best means of fostering growth.

engage in some project. Mrs. S's fifth grade formed a library club. Everyone read library books and each child made his own selection. Wednesday had the library hour; it was usually the first period in the afternoon. The first part of the period was given over to exchange of books and reading; the teacher gave guidance and help when requested to do so. The latter part of the period, children reported to the whole class and shared their impressions with each other.

The Whole Group Plans

A class should participate as a whole in many activities not directly needed in guided learning or experiences or skills. The group as a whole should participate in preparation for class parties, and excursions, exhibits, watching television or listening to radio programs, preparing for special day and special event observances, organization of class rules, and musical programs. Mrs. F's class listened to news programs over the radio each week. After each broadcast the class entered into a discussion of what had been heard and gave worthwhile interpretations of what it meant. Points were debated, children argued,

but they were friendly discussions.

When the whole class works as a unit, there is developing in children, under teacher guidance, those intangibles known as concomitant learnings such as cooperative living, the acceptance of each other, the respect and appreciation of ideas of one another, training in social habits, and responsibility of planning and working for the good of all.

Since children come from widely different environments, with widely different maturation levels, some with little or no experiences on which to build, we as teachers must be always on the alert. We must prepare ourselves in the processes of social change, by doing research on the processes of grouping.

We have come a long way from the one-group reading plan; we have passed the three-group reading plan and have advanced to groups of four, five, or six in order to promote growth in areas of total child development. Changes have been and will be made to keep step with a rapidly changing and scientific world.

I believe that children learn at the level at which they are ready to learn—that all children learn—but intelligent grouping will facilitate this learning.

Grouping for Growth and Development

Research provides information and direction but not answers. H. Gerthson Morgan is assistant director and professor of education, Institute for Child Study, University of Maryland, College Park. Here are some important questions as to whether grouping is based on policies determined without concern for total factors of human growth.

THE ART OF EDUCATION LIES IN PROMOTING the total development of the individual in group situations. Happily, rapid progress is being made in creating educational programs that are developmental in nature in contrast to the former emphasis on direct training. This change is possible because of the presence of adequate scientific knowledge that can be applied to the educative process. Basic in this application are the scientific principles explaining the growth, development, behavior, and learning of children and youth.

These principles have produced not only differences in procedures, content, relationships, and other aspects of education, but they have presented serious questions, extensive research, many experiments, and careful evaluations concerning the grouping of children for developmental experiences.

Many practical questions indicate the nature of our current attempts at using scientific information. Are there adequate tests to determine when children should enter school? Is chronological age the best criterion for grouping? Is it possible for an over-all grouping policy to hinder individual development? or even group development? Do grouping practices actually produce problems for individuals and groups? A host of additional questions exist.

Our concerns increase in rather direct

proportion to the increase in our understanding of the forces and factors shaping the growth and development of human beings. Each concern grows from a particular segment of valid research on human behavior resulting in different interpretations and producing an amazing variety in educational policy and practice.

Research Provides Information

Research has made clear a number of processes that influence the child's satisfaction and success as a developing and learning participant in a group. Effective participation is influenced by the child's:

physical processes including level of growth, management and use of body, health and health history, and the characteristic rate at which the body produces energy;

relationships within the family group and the history of these relationships with the presence or absence of warm, close, supporting, valuing ties;

feeling of belongingness with his age mates—the roles played, the status accorded;

community and the forces operating in it and more particularly within the child's "life space," as it is individually perceived, including the demands and expectations communicated by parents, teachers, and others;

concept of self growing out of his unique history of experience and emotion including the resulting skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, goals, and the total configuration of the motivational pattern;

heredity, including the learning potential; particular adjustment problems and his characteristic patterns of mechanisms by which he comforts, reassures, and protects the integrity of the self;

concept of himself as an adequate and valued person who lives a life of significance.

These processes represent the essence of most of the fundamental research contributed from many different scientific fields. Additional contributions in furthering the understanding of these forces can be expected. The significance of the child's individual level of energy output is a relatively recent consideration to enter educational decision making. The impact of a child's concept of self on development and learning in group situations is currently being investigated in a variety of ways.

Resulting Policies Are Difficult

While this growing body of research provides a more logical basis for educational decisions, the educator, in using the research findings, must consider many factors in arriving at final policies. Thus, policies are no longer easy to make. *The chief difficulty is that each research contribution suggests a direct implication. The tendency to operate on this basis is a constant threat to adequate use of present-day knowledge, for when all research contributions are considered in their total interrelatedness, the implications become less fixed, static, and direct.*

Educational decisions must be based on the totality of appropriate research findings: implications of specific items of scientific knowledge represent an inadequate basis for decision. A careful consideration of the totality of research does present some valid principles applicable to the practices of grouping children.

No One Basis for Decision

No one self-contained force or factor influencing the child's behavior and

learning can possibly serve as the criterion for grouping children and youth if the educational process is concerned with the total development of all children.

When there is a concern for total development, all influencing processes deserve consideration. Depending on the experience to be provided, one cluster of factors may become more important than another. This is true for any consideration of the total group; it is especially true in considering the individual's placement in a group because not only is behavior and learning caused, the causes are multiple, complex, and interrelated. If education is concerned with all of the behavior and all of the learning that takes place within a group, then an adequate basis for making decisions about a total group or about an individual demands consideration of all known forces. Procedures and decisions based on the identifiable forces must be worked out in local situations through carefully evaluated experimentation.

Basic Assumptions

Regardless of the direction that such experimentation may take, it is very unlikely that a particular grouping will be completely amiss, because *human beings are more alike than they are different.*

While each participant brings to the group a unique experience story, a personal backlog of emotion and feeling, and an individual ability level to profit from experiences offered, still the various group members bring to the group essentially the same biological equipment, the same processes by which they learn, some very similar needs, varying degrees of dependency, and, in most cases, marked similarity in cultural backgrounds, yet, *each child is unique.*

The major values that accrue from the complete scope of interaction taking place within a group are based on the

uniqueness of the individuals that make up the group. Children are effective teachers of each other, and because of their individual uniqueness, all groups are rich in their resources. Resources exist in the teacher, trips, books, materials, experiments, problems, and elsewhere, but *the most valuable resources are found in the uniqueness of the individual* brought to the group. Individuals within the group must feel that they are individually valued, that they are significant in the group's progress, and that their contributions are needed.

Relationships Are Important, But—

Essential to the child's feeling free to contribute and feeling that the contribution is appropriately useful is a group climate in which good, valuing, supporting relationships exist between children and between children and teacher. Current research is lending support to the thesis that the warmth existing in the close interpersonal relationships within the group greatly facilitates the development of groups and of individuals within the groups. *Wholesome relationships facilitate but do not necessarily assure that maximum development and learning will take place.*

There are groups and school situations where relationships are most desirable; yet, in some of the same situations, the learning and development occurring leaves much to be wished. The educator must serve the important functions of providing stimulation, possibilities for interests, framework of appropriate experiences, direction that leads to the organization, integration, and use of experiences, areas for exploration, opportunities for creativity and problem solving, as well as other functions needed to promote desired development and learning.

The teacher can fulfill these functions

of education so superbly that the concern for grouping takes on less significance. *The greater significance lies in what happens within the group when the group's membership is determined and the group is functioning.*

The Group Must Be a Total Group

Maximum functioning requires the total participation of all group members. How often the statement has been heard, "This would be a wonderful group were it not for Mary!" To promote more effective and happy groups, researchers have considered how children win and lose belongingness in groups.

Each group has purposes, both group and individual. These purposes are achieved through group activities. The individual's participation in these activities is dependent upon his contributions, based on knowledge and skills. The nature of the contribution determines the roles accorded individuals in the group. Different values are attached to these roles, thereby giving the individual high or low status and prestige. To achieve the purposes through activities, to use individual contributions, to assign roles and accord status, children's groups operate under strict codes, rules, regulations, and mores.

Although there are many reasons as to why children are left out of groups, this formulation indicates some specific ones. Individuals may have purposes that conflict with those of the group. They may lack the adequacies needed to contribute. They may constantly violate the rules based on group understandings. The teacher can work on conflicting purposes, can fulfill one of the major roles of education in building adequacies, and can help interpret the codes and rules.

For much too long writers have emphasized the absence of specific adequacies as the cause for an individual's lack of belongingness. *Current experiences suggest that by far the majority of children lack belongingness because they*

constantly violate group-agreed-upon understandings. Why, then, do youngsters violate such codes? In general, such children are concerned with basic needs more important than group belongingness. In fact, basic needs may be such that personal dynamics force a child to violate group rules and regulations. Without basic love, a child may attempt to win other significant relationships through achievement, often academic achievement. A group operating on a basis of sharing equally and taking turns may provide a rough impact on the child, who, in the struggle for achievement, insists on being first, monopolizes the discussion, brings excess materials, demands more attention, and shows many panicky behaviors, especially with slight failures.

That Concept of Needs

In recent educational history, the concept of need has largely represented the search for the basic needs of all children and youth. Many attempts are being made to base curriculum experiences directly on these needs. A more logical approach to basic needs and curriculum practices may exist in the concept of individual needs. Each life story contains a unique constellation of factors and forces shaping, evoking, producing, directing, and creating specific needs for each individual.

Fortunately, an adequate approach to the understanding of individual needs is now possible for educators, but it calls for serious and basic study. An adequate body of scientific information explaining human behavior exists, primarily within the various sciences, but progress is being made in bringing these contributions together in a synthesis. Of equal importance is the progress being made in gathering objective information about children, and the use of the scientific method in applying appropriate explana-

tory concepts to a particular body of information about a child or group. Happily, programs of inservice education, far beyond the experimental stages, now exist whereby educators can become the possessors of the scientific knowledge and can become skilled in applying it to school problems—problems of the individual needs.

Valid principles of *human development* serve as a cogent basis on which to build educational programs. Too often, educators find authority within policies and practices. Actually, authority is more present within the child's life. Physical growth, for one example only, is a genuine authority. Growth often conflicts with school policies—policies must give: growth will not!

Knowledge of sound principles of *human development* serves as a basis for determining individual needs thus helping in attaining the art of education by providing for the development of the individual in group situations.

The Group Goes Far

Many people, especially parents, feel that on the present American scene, individual children must go "too far" to be good members of a group. There must be a line—just where? One speaker said recently, the current American idea is "Be groupy—or else!" Another recently used the topic, "How an Individual Protects Himself from the Group." One discussant expressed the trend by saying that "If three Americans had to bail out of a plane, they would form a committee on the way down to investigate the cause of the crash."

Effective group operation does not demand complete uniformity. Regardless of how a group operates, it is hoped that provision will always be made for accepting individual differences within the group.

for a good reading program

MANY Methods and Materials

Reading is important to purposeful living of the child at any age and so, many ways of working with reading materials are needed. You will use this article for new ideas, will give to beginning teachers, and will lend to parents. Discussion of commercial, teacher-made, and children's own materials is included along with practical illustrations of different grouping practices for different purposes.



"INDEED WE ARE TEACHING THAT important R—reading," said the principal of Sunnyside School as she welcomed the new member of the Board of Education. "You'll find our teachers using many methods and a variety of materials. As we visit the rooms I think you will see

Courtesy, Oklahoma City Public Schools

the children are learning to read skillfully and with lasting interest."

The visitor walked down the hall with Miss Bennett who said, "Let's start with a kindergarten, Mr. Thomas."

A quiet group of kindergarten children was listening to a story. Miss Gould came over to greet Miss Bennett and Mr. Thomas. Miss Gould explained that the reader, a second-grade youngster, had prepared her story with her teacher. She was reading *Millions of Cats* with enthusiasm and ease. The second-grade teacher helped each child who came to read choose appropriate stories and prepare them carefully. This still allowed Miss Gould time to tell the old favorites.

As it was time for outdoor play Miss Gould quietly called all those children whose names began with the same sound as duck. Next came the group whose names began like jump, and on until all had gone. Miss Bennett explained, "This game helps the children learn to discriminate sounds. As beginning readers next year, they will need this skill in hearing differences between such words as duck and luck."

"Perhaps we'll find the sixes in this room sharing stories," whispered Miss Bennett as they entered a sunny room. A little girl in pigtails was telling about her baby brother as the teacher wrote her story on the chalk board. Although it was Sharon's story, the other children gave suggestions for better ways of expressing ideas. When her story was completed the children took turns reading it. A freckled Sandy said, "Sharon's story reminds me of our box movie."

Miss Cherry agreed, "It is like the

story of 'Our New Pet.' The children in that story decided that a baby brother was the best pet, didn't they? Since your group made it, Sandy, would you like to show it to us again?"

Sandy brought the movie which had been made by drawing pictures on a strip of shelf paper. This simple "film," attached to cardboard rollers, was pulled through slits cut in opposite sides of a suitbox. The children read the captions under the pictures as Sandy and Helen rolled the film.

Miss Bennett told Mr. Thomas how the stories helped children solve some family adjustment problems.

Experiences Give Meaning

In the next room the teacher was just finishing writing their news of the morning on the board. There seemed to be an air of excitement in the room, and no wonder! Their news told why:

Today is our Big Day!

We are going to the farm.

Tomorrow will be Princess Elizabeth's big day.

She will be crowned Queen.

But today we are going to the farm. The children took turns reading their news: some reading the sentence which told what was going to happen to Princess Elizabeth, others finding the two sentences that were nearly alike, and others finding the number of times the word *day* was used. Before the bus arrived, each child had had an opportunity to read part of the exciting news.

The preparation which had been made for this farm trip was obvious. Pictures of farm animals and buildings were labeled and attractively displayed. Small boxes on the science table contained oats, seed corn, corn on the cob, straw, and

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hay. Some oats had been planted and were just showing green. Experience charts told of making butter and cottage cheese. Many books containing farm stories were on the library table. Miss Bennett and Mr. Thomas looked at a large spiral-bound drawing tablet. One reading group had made its own story about a Holstein calf. The teacher had printed the story at their dictation and they had illustrated it. This had been placed with the other farm "reference books."

With the arrival of the bus, each child lined up clutching a piece of paper containing a list of animals, plants, machinery, or buildings found on a farm. Miss Bennett asked one of the "young farmers" what he was going to do with his list.

Bill explained, "You see, Miss Bennett, there are so many things to see on a farm that each one of us is going to look for certain things."

Miss Bennett helped Mr. Thomas see the benefits derived from such a trip. "Children get meaning from words as they build meanings from firsthand experiencing. Their lists will help them associate the words with the real objects."

As they passed Mrs. Wieland's room, Miss Bennett realized that the children must be down in the gym having rhythms. "Mrs. Wieland is particularly successful in interpreting our reading program to parents. Do come in and see her fine materials."

They entered a gaily decorated room, literally filled with charts, labels, books, signs, and children's pictures. Mrs. Wieland showed them one of the newest film strips which accompanied one of the readers, supplementing and enriching the content of the stories. They looked at a chart which she had made at the beginning of the year. It told about a red, yellow, and blue balloon and had three bouncing balloons attached to it.

"The children insisted on keeping it in the room and brought new balloons for it frequently," Mrs. Wieland explained. "It's fun to see how ingenious one can be in attracting children's interests. I have found that six- and seven-year-olds are intrigued by reading stories about their own favorite toys and dolls, particularly if these objects are small enough to be attached to a chart or book." She showed them a chart story with a small sail boat tied on it. They saw a booklet containing stories of a Raggedy Ann Doll, and Raggedy Ann herself was attached to the cardboard cover. An experience story about Linda's new dress contained a swatch of the material.

A large riddle book was on the reading table. Each page contained a simple story such as:

I have two wheels.

You can ride on me.

What am I?

On the opposite page there was a large sheet of colored paper with the suggestion "Look and See" written on it. Under the colored paper was a picture of a bicycle and the word *bicycle*. Mrs. Wieland showed them this book and remarked, "If you know what six- and seven-year-olds like, you know how to make learning interesting for them."

Mr. Thomas asked Mrs. Wieland about the books the children use in the first-grade reading program. She showed him several sets of attractive readers and explained their careful construction: their controlled vocabulary, limited number of new words per page, repetition of new words, interesting stories, format and illustrations. She explained the gradation of the books from preprimers to third-grade readers. From her Parents Bookshelf, where she kept books on teaching of reading, child development, and parent-child relations, she

drew two readers, published thirty years ago. They compared the old, unattractive, moralistic readers with the modern, attractive ones of today. Mrs. Wieland laughingly said, "These two readers are my best answer for anyone who wants the 'Good old days in education.'"

Reading in Dramatic Play

In the second grade across the hall, they saw a large streamline train constructed of orange crates and covered with wrapping paper painted a bright yellow. The children were busily engaged in many activities. Miss Melin, the teacher, spoke to the visitors, "This is our 'free choice' time. During our planning period, the children chose the activities they would like. We have to take turns playing in the train.

"The group in this corner is making characters for a story they liked in one of the readers. Miss Nash, our student teacher, told the group the story of *Nothing At All* using a felt board. The children asked to make one of their own. A large board is covered with felt. They are drawing their characters on Manila paper. Strips of flannel pasted on the back will make them adhere to the felt board as the children relate their story.

"Perhaps you would like to watch the group playing in the train. You'll see the game they are playing in the diner involves reading. Joan is waiting for me to hear the story she has prepared to read to the kindergarten tomorrow."

Three children were working in the mail car sorting letters which the group had written previously. Two girls peacefully pretended to be sleeping in their lower and upper berths made of tables securely fastened. The children in the diner were ordering their food from menus they had carefully made. The waiter wrote their orders and gave them to the chef. He, in turn, read the order

and filled it by using cutout pictures of food. The waiter then had to remember what each customer had ordered and serve him.

The visitors noticed that the children who were not playing in the train were happily engaged in other activities. A group of four children was playing a word lotto game. Several were painting at the easels. One had painted a picture of a large spotted snake with a beautiful blue bow about its neck! She was illustrating the story of *Amanda* which Miss Melin was reading to the group. Two enthusiastic little girls were matching words and pictures. Each had cards showing three words and three pictures. Brightly colored shoestrings were attached beside the words. By putting the strings in the correct holes they matched word and picture. One boy was working by himself arranging pictures of a story in logical sequence along the chalk rail of the blackboard.

Miss Bennett said, "This is such an interesting room that it is difficult to leave, but I do want you to visit the second and third grade combination."

Teaching or Hearing?

"Mrs. Anderson's room is having their reading period now. Let's join one of their groups." Four boys and a girl were discussing one of the stories.

"Have you ever felt lazy in the morning like Jane did? When?" asked Mrs. Anderson. The children told of their experiences.

"Let's read and find out what William was doing all the time Jane was in bed," the teacher suggested. Different children read the page aloud. Mrs. Anderson quietly supplied a word when it was needed. Several times she suggested that a child skip over a troublesome word and finish the sentence. Frequently, the child could then go back and supply the word

from the context of the story. At no time was the continuity and the fun of the story interrupted. The children read the next page silently to find out what finally happened to William. They discussed the page and Tom read what William had to say as he descended from the top of the tree. The children did not reread this page, but read on to the end of the story. Before returning to their desks, Mrs. Anderson listed some of the words which had bothered them. The words which she had written on the board were read, discussed, and located again in the story. Mrs. Anderson gave each a piece of drawing paper which they folded into four sections. They decided to draw two funny things which Jane had done and two funny things William had done on that day when the two had agreed to exchange places. They would write a sentence under each picture to describe it, using their books to help them with spelling.

Taking a moment to talk with her visitors, Mrs. Anderson was enthusiastic about the progress this group was making. "I started them last Fall in preprimers and with their own experience stories. They still need much guidance with easy reading materials at their own levels of confidence. They will continue to need help. There is a difference between hearing children read and teaching children to read."

Performing a Service

As they entered one of the third grades, Miss Bennett pointed out its unique contribution to the school. This group served as a communication center for most of the school's bulletins. A movie was scheduled for tomorrow for the primary grades. Two boys and a girl were carefully printing large announcements which could be read by each primary grade. A primary typewriter was used

by the children for quick notices. The school secretary came in each morning to consult with the bulletin committee. The one requirement was that it be written simply enough for primary children to read.

This group had also decided to make signs for the various rooms. As Ralph pointed out, when they made the signs large enough for all to see and read, "Then the sevens will learn where the library is, and the word that stands for the library."

And Mary thought that if she passed the sign every day, it would help her learn to spell *library*!

These projects had developed from the interest in their own class bulletin board. Several children were grouped around this board reading the invitation from one of the intermediate grades to a puppet show. Under the S's there was a birthday card for Ellen Shaw from her teacher. Mary, Jim, and Don were reminded of speech lessons. A note of congratulation had been written to Robbie and Peter for the excellent care they had given the doves last week. There were notes from other children, invitations to come and play, children's jokes. Joan came over to show Miss Bennett the note she had found for her mother. Miss Bennett smilingly showed it to Mr. Thomas:

Dear Mrs. Kendall,

I thought you would like to know what a fine job Joan did of sharing her trip experiences with us today. We all enjoyed hearing her read her story of New Salem. Joan's reading is improving daily!

Sincerely,

Catherine Baker

"We encourage the teachers to send frequent, informal reports on children's progress to the parents," Miss Bennett remarked as they left the busy room.

Upstairs they found a group of eight-

year-olds sharing the experience of a short, but interesting trip. Their teacher had copied one of the children's stories on a large sheet of oak tag. The children were reading it together.

Our Trip

Lee took us on a tour of the basement of our school. We saw the furnaces and learned how they operate. It cost \$46 to heat and light the Big Auditorium. We traced a pipe to our room, and the pipe was in the south bike room. We went to see the panel where Lee controls the heating in different parts of the building. We saw Lee turn on the heating units and we heard the air. There are three furnaces to heat the school. Lee opened the furnace and we saw inside. The flames were real hot when Lee opened the furnace.

Discussion followed with many interesting questions: How much does it cost to heat the building? How many light bulbs are replaced each year? What does one of our third readers cost? These and other questions were recorded and sent by messenger to the school secretary.

Outside the door Miss Bennett hesitated and smiled. "Number work, or reading?" she asked. "It's hard to tell, isn't it?"

What Does the Librarian Do?

"The librarian is helping a group of eight- and nine-year-olds with library skills." They stepped into a comfortable, attractive room where Miss Holmes was explaining shelving of books according to the Dewey system. Large cards with title, author, and number, represented books from the science section. The children arranged these cards in the proper order on the bulletin board.

Next, the librarian referred to the chart which listed the questions the children had asked about insects. She explained the use of the card catalog in locating books they would need. While Miss Holmes helped some of the children use the card catalog, the room

teacher, Mr. Haines, worked with others in using encyclopedias. Some of the children sought information in magazines.

As she closed the door, Miss Bennett said, "This group has a keen interest in insects. We'll see their collection later. They plan to prepare an annotated bibliography for the use of other intermediate groups."

Specific Skills Are Needed

"One of the boys told me they expected the silkworms to begin spinning cocoons today," the principal remarked. "Let's stop here in Mr. Haines' room." Two boys were watching silkworms greedily munch mulberry leaves. One boy asked the visitors to see the ants at work in the "anterrarium" his committee had made. Three boys were bringing in the books which the group had checked out of the library earlier in the morning. Another group was selecting pictures for a bulletin board labeled "Helpful and Harmful Insects." "We're going to make a chart showing insect damage to crops," said Mary. "This *Agricultural Yearbook* is just what we need!"

Mr. Haines asked the children to go to their seats. "We have brought the books from the library," he said. "I think you'll find many of the answers to your questions about insects. What part of these books will help you locate information quickly?"

"I think the table of contents helps," remarked Bill. "You can see whether the book has what you need."

"Not always," said George. "Sometimes you find a topic in the index when it isn't listed in the contents."

"That's true. We can use both," said Mr. Haines. "Let's use the index as a guide now. While Kent distributes the books I'll give each of you one of these sample sheets of a make-believe index." Using the sample he called their atten-

tion to main topics and sub-topics. "Will this imaginary book tell about trap door spiders? On what page does the longest discussion of bees begin?" After asking similar questions he suggested they examine the index of the book Kent had placed on each desk. "Raise your hand if you think you will find information to answer the first question about insects which is on our chart." He walked about, helping some children with cross references as they looked up various topics. The group continued this reading lesson as Mr. Thomas and Miss Bennett left.

"Science and reading merge, you can see," commented the principal as they walked down the hall. "These science interests and activities provide excellent opportunities to develop skill in critical reading. In one group recently an argument arose as to the speed of airplanes. It was soon apparent that copyright dates had to be carefully checked. Children are learning to distinguish fact and theory, and to watch for such statements as 'scientists believe,' and 'according to present theory.'"

They went into a fourth grade but the children were in the music room. "It takes skill to read pictures, too," said Miss Bennett. "Mrs. Glenn has displayed these pictures about the sugar beet industry at the children's eye level. Notice the questions on this placard at the beginning of the series. These questions under the pictures direct the children to note details, to make comparisons, and to relate the pictures to other reading. Here is a large chart showing the process of making sugar. In this pocket on the bulletin board are slips of paper with each step of the process stated briefly. When a child finishes reading the chart he may test himself by tacking the slips of paper in order on the bulletin board. Then he can check his work by referring to the chart."

Afraid of Book Reports?

"Sharing favorite stories stimulates reading," the principal remarked as she guided the visitor into Miss Davis' room where the nines and tens were chuckling as the teacher read an amusing incident.

The teacher concluded, "And—you'll have to read it for yourself!" Hands waved for the privilege of reading the new book and a waiting list was started. "Who is ready to tell about a book today?" Miss Davis asked. Five hands went up. Each child gave a brief description of his book. "Who would like to hear more about *The Green Ginger Jar*?" "Who would like to hear Bill tell about *Homer Price*?" In this way five groups were formed and the children found places in various parts of the room where interested listeners could hear these "book reports."

Help for Slow Readers

"Mr. Wallace plans with his ten-year-olds for a daily reading time in which the children select library books or continue reading materials related to current science or social studies interests. Also, I think you will be interested in his work with children who are having difficulty with reading."

They sat near a desk where the teacher was discussing a book with one of the boys. "In what ways was Lee a coward? Was he afraid of everything?" The boy answered thoughtfully. Then Mr. Wallace suggested he begin reading aloud at the place he was reading before they stopped to discuss the characters and plot. Before the teacher moved on to the next desk he made a few notes on a card to indicate Tom's progress.

At the next desk he helped one child check a simple workbook lesson. Then the boy, who was evidently a "slow reader," brought out a scrapbook containing pictures of sports equipment and

activities. As Ronnie and Mr. Wallace discussed the pictures the teacher wrote captions on slips of paper. Then the captions and pictures were matched. As Ronnie started to copy the captions in his book the teacher moved on to help another boy who had been testing himself with a set of word cards. Mr. Wallace praised him and helped with the words in the "don't know pile." Then they worked on Mike's report. The book he had selected was obviously too difficult, but Mike was anxious to use it. Mr. Wallace read several paragraphs aloud and helped him interpret the pictures. They moved to the back of the room where a typewriter was available for the use of all. As Mike summarized the important things he wanted to tell, Mr. Wallace typed the report which Mike could now read easily and happily.

What Is Critical Reading?

"I think Miss Lane's group is out, too," Miss Bennett remarked. It was obvious that the fifth and sixth graders in this classroom were producing the school newspaper. "The weekly newspaper is very important to this group. Reading and geography are combined as the children read about news over the world. These children also have ordered newspapers from various cities and compare the reports of current affairs. This interest developed with the election last Fall. Miss Lane has been encouraging critical reading in this way."

Next door, sixth graders were beginning to read their weekly newspapers when the visitors entered. "During the first week of school, Miss Watts placed sample copies of various weekly papers for differing ability levels on the reading table. Each child was to select the one he could read easily and the one he felt would be best for him," explained the principal.

Miss Watts invited all the children who were reading about the coronation to come to the discussion center. "Let's see how well we can skim to get facts," she said. "When you find the answer to the question I ask, turn your paper over. Now read quickly to find out when the coronation will take place." This was followed by a series of questions which the children answered readily.

Then she met with another group who had finished reading the first news article in their paper. "What were the most important points in this story?" she asked. Suggestions were made and evaluated. "When you return to your desk, write four important points about jet airplanes in this next article. This will help in reporting to the whole group."

When a majority of the children had finished reading their papers, Miss Watts asked one child to serve as group leader. Sharing news from several papers enriched the discussion for all.

Many Methods, Many Materials

"These teachers certainly have to be acquainted with more books and materials than I realized," Mr. Thomas remarked as they returned to Miss Bennett's office. "Now I understand why so much time is needed to prepare for the school day."

"Yes, a good teacher is constantly looking for new books and materials," answered Miss Bennett. "I have tried to show you today that our teachers are using many methods of teaching reading, and I know you were aware of the wide variety of published materials, teacher-made materials, and children's materials for reading. You've seen ability grouping, interest grouping, and individual procedures. In this developmental reading program the teachers adapt methods and materials to meet the needs and abilities of each child."

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NEWS and REVIEWS

News HERE and THERE . . .

By FRANCES HAMILTON

New ACE Branches

Newington Association for Childhood Education, Connecticut

Alpine Association for Childhood Education, Utah

Lee M. Thurston

Lee M. Thurston, Commissioner of Education, died in Washington, D. C., September 4, 1953. On July 2, Dr. Thurston became Commissioner of Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, succeeding Earl J. McGrath. Dr. Thurston was state superintendent of public instruction in Michigan, and dean-designate, School of Education, Michigan State College, at the time of his appointment as Commissioner.

Dr. Thurston met with the ACEI Executive Board during its August meeting in Washington.

Marie Butts

Marie Butts, emeritus general secretary of the International Bureau of Education, died in Geneva, Switzerland, June 2, 1953. Miss Butts was a tireless worker in international activities in the field of pedagogical information and education for peace. She was responsible for the creation of the quarterly *Bulletin* of the International Bureau of Education. Those who attended the 1936 ACEI Conference will remember Miss Butts as a speaker at the general session on international affairs.

Life Members

The ACEI welcomes the following people as life members:

Margaret Hill, Santa Barbara, California

Hilda J. Hunter, Kansas City, Kansas

Marianna Irwin, Chicago, Illinois

Vera D. Petersen, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Wanda Robertson, Salt Lake City, Utah

Mildred L. Schroeder, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

ACEI Permanent Headquarters

The search for an appropriate site for a permanent ACEI headquarters building continues. Members of the ACEI Executive Board, during their semi-annual meeting in

Washington in August, visited possible sites and formulated plans for continuation of the quest for a suitable location for headquarters.

1953-54 ACEI Fellow

MINA MARIE MILLER, a teacher in the public



Mina Marie Miller

schools of Austin, Texas, began her work as ACEI Fellow on August 1. In the work at headquarters in Washington, D. C., and in Executive Board sessions, Miss Miller represents all ACEI branch members and particularly those of the Southwest region.

Miss Miller holds a Bachelor of Science degree

in elementary education from Texas College of Arts and Industries and a Master of Education degree from the University of Texas. She has served as president of the Austin ACE and has been a member of a number of committees in her ACE branch. Miss Miller is the second Fellow to represent the Southwest ACEI region.

The Fellow is selected from the teachers who are nominated by former ACEI Executive Board members of that region. The Fellow for 1954-55 will be chosen from the Great Lakes region.

Changes

Myron Cunningham, ACEI vice-president representing intermediate education, has joined the staff of the College of Education of the University of Florida at Gainesville. He was formerly director of curriculum and instruction in the public schools of Abilene, Texas.

Julian Greenlee has been appointed professor of education at Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida. He leaves Western Michigan College of Education, Kalamazoo, where he has been professor of physics and has specialized in science education.

Nancy Nunnally has been appointed assistant professor of education at the Teachers College of University of Cincinnati. She has been a member of the staff at Indiana University, where she served as adviser of the Indiana University ACE.

Aileen W. Robinson is directing the nursery education work at the Maharani Devi Girls' School, Jaipur, Rajasthan, India, during this school year. She is on leave from her position as principal of Edgewood Elementary School, Scarsdale, New York.

New ACEI Publication

Guiding Children In School and Out, the 1953 reprint service bulletin, is off the press. Ten important and worth-while articles dealing with guidance of children were chosen from the 1952-53 issues of CHILDHOOD EDUCATION. The articles included were selected to help the reader understand how children grow and how this affects the learning situation. People who work with children in the home, the school, and the community, will find this bulletin of special value.

The bulletin may be purchased from the Association for Childhood Education International, 1200-15th Street, N.W., Washington 5, D. C. Pp. 36, 50¢.

Children Under Six

The "South's Six and One-Half Million Youngest Citizens" was the theme of the Southern Regional Conference on Children Under Six, held at Daytona Beach, Florida, in April. ACEI was represented by Mamie Heinz, associate secretary. The Daytona Beach ACE assisted in local planning for the conference.

NANE Conference

The National Association for Nursery Education will hold its biennial Conference October 28-31, 1953 in Minneapolis. Further information concerning the conference is available from Elizabeth M. Fuller, Institute of Child Welfare, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis 14.

Educational Policies Commission

Howard E. Wilson of New York City will become secretary of the NEA-AASA Educational Policies Commission on November 1, 1953, succeeding William G. Carr in that post. As a member of the executive staff of the

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace since 1945, Dr. Wilson has had an active role in the development of many educational enterprises bearing on international relations.

Dr. Wilbur Murra has served as acting secretary of the Educational Policies Commission for a year.

Director General of UNESCO

Luther Harris Evans was elected Director General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, July 1. Dr. Evans was one of the original members of the U. S. National Commission for UNESCO, and last year served as its chairman.

Dr. Evans has been Librarian of the Library of Congress during the past eight years.

American Education Week

"Good Schools Are Your Responsibility" is the theme of American Education Week, November 8-14.

American Education Week sponsors are: National Education Association, American Legion, United States Office of Education, and National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

For a list of the special materials, which have been made available at nominal cost to help planning committees develop their programs, write directly to the National Education Association, 1201-16th Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.

Citizenship Conference

The Eighth National Conference on Citizenship was held in Washington, September 17-18. "What Price Freedom" was the conference theme. This conference is sponsored annually by the National Education Association and the U. S. Department of Justice. Delegates from the Association for Childhood Education International to the Citizenship Conference were: Constance Carr, Editor of ACEI publications, and Mina Marie Miller, ACEI Fellow for 1953-54.

UN Day

United Nations Day will be observed on October 24, the anniversary of the signing of the United Nations charter at San Francisco. Suggestions for community and school planning for the observance of the occasion of the eighth birthday of United Nations Day may be secured from the United States Committee for United Nations Day, 816-21st Street, N.W., Washington 6, D. C.



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Books for Children . . .

Editor, VERA PETERSEN

THE BORROWERS. By Mary Norton. Illustrated by Beth and Joe Krush. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 383 Madison Ave., 1953. Pp. 180, 5¼ x 8 in., \$2.50. Have you made your Christmas shopping list? If not, jot down *The Borrowers*. If you have, add *The Borrowers*. How many copies you will need depends on how many friends you have between the ages of eight and one hundred and eight, for here is a book to delight all ages, most especially if read aloud. It is an excellent book for a family to read together.

If ever you have carefully put away a cuff link, an exceptionally small screw, a single special delivery stamp, or a particularly fine needle and then when you wanted any one of these, absolutely could not find it—then you understand about *Borrowers*. When you think for a moment of all the little safety pins that must be replaced again and again then you know for certain that there *are* *Borrowers*. Homily, Pod, and Arrietty (mother, father, and daughter) were the minute little members of the Clock family who borrowed everything they had—even their names, "which didn't sound quite right." From their home between the joists below the kitchen floor of a London mansion, Pod and later Arrietty worked providing themselves with both essentials and luxuries from the "human beans" who lived upstairs.

This artistic fantasy is written with zest and a substantial underveining of plausibility—without which real fantasy does not exist.

LITTLE FRIGHTENED TIGER. By Golden MacDonald. Illustrated by Leonard Weisgard. New York: Doubleday, 575 Madison Ave., 1953. Pp. 34, 10½ x 8 in., \$2.50. "Once there was a little tiger who was absolutely scared to death. He shook in the morning. He shook in the bright hot sun at noon. He shook in the sunset when the golden shadows fell with their last long rays on the tawny backs of the tigers who had all come out on the warm rocks. And he shook all night, and he woke up in the morning shaking. He was scared to death, the poor little tiger.

"His mother and father, who were tigers,

were very, very brave tigers, as all tigers are brave. . . . But at any rate, this little tiger was a frightened tiger. And so one day his mother said: 'Little tiger, stop shaking or you will shake your little stripes off.'"

Here is a book that will surely be applauded by our fours, fives, and sixes. Short brisk sentences together with long uncluttered ones are skillfully blended to produce an ease of style that is deceptively simple. There is a richness of vocabulary to enhance both the listening and the reptitious speech of young children.

The publication of *Little Frightened Tiger* is one more tribute to the work of the late Margaret Wise Brown, who wrote also under several pseudonyms one of which, as for this book, was Golden MacDonald.

Leonard Weisgard has contributed unerringly with his excellent, textured illustrations—this time in two colors, yellow and green, along with the black.


This book is important for its practical lesson that all of us are afraid of something whether we are big or little, young or old, but the book is even more important because it keeps that lesson as a by-product.

WHEN THE MOON IS NEW. By *Laura Bannon*. Illustrations by the author. Chicago: *Albert Whitman*, 560 W. Lake St., 1953. Pp. 45, 7¾ x 9 in., \$2.75. Six- to ten-year-olds will love little Rainbow Jumper, a Seminole Indian child who has sensed a mystery in her camp and is told she will have a surprise "when the moon is new." Rainbow, who has just learned to use a simple hand-powered sewing machine, the pride of all Seminole women, speculates and hopes that her surprise will be a little machine all for herself. After all, hadn't her mother said, "It will keep your hands busy," and Big Grandmother, "It will be something new, something you will treasure."

When the time finally came that the moon was new, there was no little sewing machine for Rainbow, but to her unexcelled delight—a new baby brother!

Here is a regionally significant story, warming the hearts of younger children. It is rich with brilliantly colored illustrations, a companion-piece to *Manuela's Birthday* (Whitman, 1943) a story of old Mexico, also written and illustrated by Laura Bannon.


(Continued on page 90)



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Books for Children

(Continued from page 89)

STORY OF THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. By Maud and Miska Petersham. Illustrations by the authors. New York: Macmillan, 60 Fifth Ave., 1953. Pp. 80, 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 in., \$3. Continuing their "This is America" books (*An American A B C*, *The Rooster Crows*, *America's Stamps*, and *A Bird in the Hand*, all published by the Macmillan Co.) Maud and Miska Petersham now present their *Story of the Presidents of the United States of America*. It is a handsome book with numerous illustrations in black and white and blue. Enhancing the end papers are facsimiles of the signatures of each of the presidents.

Here is a book to add spirit to lessons in American History for fifth and sixth grades.

GHOSTS, GHOSTS, GHOSTS. Stories selected by Phyllis R. Fenner. Illustrations by Manning de V. Lee. New York: Franklin Watts, Inc., 119 W. 57th St., 1952. Pp. 281, 6 x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in., \$2.50. "In this delightfully spine-chilling collection" Phyllis Fenner has col-

lected ghostly stories from the distinguished pens of Ruth Sawyer, Bertha Gunterman, Halina Gorska, Jan Struther, Stephen Vincent Benet and others. There are in the collection a few stories that could be used in the intermediate grades, but the greatest share are "thrillers" for upper grade youngsters.

TREES AND THEIR STORY. By Dorothy Sterling. Illustrated with photographs by Myron Ehrenberg. New York: Doubleday, 575 Madison Ave., 1953. Pp. 119, 6 x 9 in., \$2.50. Exceptional for its distinctive photographs and well-written text, this book will be a useful one for all elementary grades. The clear black and white photographs are in some instances enlarged, in others taken close-up to show the exact size of a leaf, seed pod, or flower. When used for reference material this book will have to be read to primary children, but intermediate and upper grade children can read it for themselves.

In *Trees and Their Story* Dorothy Sterling and Myron Ehrenberg have conveyed the beauty, wonder, and intricate design of nature as found in trees, our oldest and biggest plants.

Early Fall Titles

PITSCHI

Story and six-color pictures by HANS FISCHER. "A well-known Swiss artist has made an enchanting picture story . . . about a little kitten dissatisfied with his cathood."—Virginia Kirkus. Ages 4-8. \$3.00

THE CHRISTMAS BUNNY

By WILL AND NICOLAS. Four-color and black-and-white drawings by Nicolas enhance this amusing and tender story of Davy and his adventures among the forest animals the night before Christmas. Ages 4-8. \$2.50

MOTHER GOOSE RIDDLE RHYMES

Five-color pictures by JOSEPH LOW. A distinguished graphic artist has turned Mother Goose into a delightful guessing game, through charming rebus picture-puzzles. Ages 6 up. \$2.50

THE BORROWERS

By MARY NORTON. Winner of England's Carnegie Medal as the most outstanding children's book of 1952. "A book which, I venture to prophesy, will join 'Alice' and 'Peter Pan' as a nursery classic."—Childhood. Illustrated by Beth and Joe Krush. Ages 8 up. \$2.50

THE WISHING APPLE TREE

By JEAN BOTHWELL. A lively story of how some boys and girls awaken the interest of a Nebraska farming community in their small church. Illustrated by Marshall Davis. Ages 9-12. \$2.95

JAPAN IN STORY AND PICTURES

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Books for Adults . . .

Editors, Dept. of Education
NISTC, DeKalb, Illinois

THE TEACHER WAS BLACK. *By H. E. O. James and Cora Tennen. London: Wm. Heinemann, Ltd., 99 Great Russell St., 1953. Pp. 120. 10s 6d. (Edition also available through New Education Book Club).*

This book is a description of an experiment in international understanding sponsored by UNESCO. Boys and girls, aged twelve to fourteen, in a school in England were interviewed to find out how they felt toward various types of foreign people. Then these children were taught for two weeks by two Negro women teachers from the Gold Coast. After the teachers had left, the children were interviewed again concerning how they felt toward people of different nationalities and races. It was found that knowing and liking these two Negroes caused most of the children to change attitudes of friendliness toward all Negroes, and in many cases toward other foreign people too. Where earlier they had said that Negroes were "wild," "cruel," "savage," and that they did not like their color, many children now made such statements as, "I didn't used to like the color, but it seems different if the people are friendly to you. You just forget it." "I like the Africans now." "They're as civilized as us."

This experiment shows that good personal contacts with some members of a foreign nation or race can change attitudes toward the people as a whole. It may suggest to parents and teachers ways in which they can provide such personal contacts for children.—
Reviewed by IRENE FELTMAN.

THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN PERSONNEL WORK. *By Ruth Strang. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953. Fourth edition, enlarged and revised. Pp. 478.*

\$3.75. This work shows the usual deep understanding of boys and girls and the appreciation of the needs of teachers which characterizes Miss Strang's writings. Opportunities and needs for personnel work to be done by teachers are delineated in story form which is realistic and vivid, an approach which will

(Continued on page 94)

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Illus. by Bunji Tagawa

"An excellent beginner's book on the meaning of Law. It connects vividly with everyday life; valuable to supplement many parts of social studies and an important book for school libraries." N. Y. Herald Tribune.

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THE MOON

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Illus. by Bunji Tagawa

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LIFE ON THE EARTH

by Rose Wyler and Gerald Ames

Illus. by Gerald Ames

"Authors write skillfully, gearing their vocabulary and style to secondary school students."—Library Journal.

THE WAY OF SCIENCE

Its Growth and Method

by John Somerville

Illus. by Dwinell Grant

"The author briefly surveys the history of science and the meaning of the induction method of reasoning and its applications to the social sciences."—Library Journal.

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Books for Adults

(Continued from page 92)

interest not only teachers but parents, administrators, guidance workers, and others who work with children. Techniques, principles of personnel work, theory and practice are concretely and practically demonstrated. Well worth a place on each teacher's professional shelf.—Reviewed by TOM RINGNESS.

AMERICAN SCHOOL CURRICULUM.

American Association of School Administrators, NEA. Thirty-first Yearbook. 1201 16th St. N.W., Washington, D. C.: 1953.

Pp. 551. \$5. A thoroughly documented volume, this yearbook emphasizes the role of American public education in promoting the democratic way of life. One of the basic tenets of this way of life is the maximum development of the individual coupled with a maximum contribution of the individual to the society to which he belongs. This society includes not only his immediate community, but his country and the commonwealth of nations—in short, a society which is global in its scope.

Emphasis is laid on the concept that the curriculum is improved, not by mere accretions of subject-matter areas, but by appropriate reorganization to achieve its purposes better. This, according to the authors, necessitates a consideration of the learner, how he grows and develops, and of the contributions which can be made by the teacher, home, community, and better materials of instruction.

The reader is allowed to sample briefly the current development of the public school curriculum, particularly as it relates to elementary and secondary phases of education. Finally, the techniques and criteria of appraisal are emphasized, particularly as they affect evaluation of pupil progress and the school's total effectiveness.—Reviewed by MARTIN H. BARTELS.

YOUR CHILD AND HIS PROBLEMS. By

J. D. Teicher, M.D. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 34 Beacon St., 1953. Pp. 291. \$3.75.

A concisely written "basic guide for parents" providing a clear and rather simplified treatment of problems in such areas as eating and feeding, the newborn baby, learning to keep clean, sex, jealousy, sleep, fears, and a dozen



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other topics. The purpose of the book is to discuss causes for difficulties and to suggest actual procedures for parents to follow.

This is a useful book for teachers to have when parents come in for help. It would be of considerable aid to kindergarten and early elementary teachers, but should be considered as a brief, basic handbook and not a comprehensive treatment of problems.—*Reviewed by* THOMAS A. RINGNESS.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OBJECTIVES. By Nolan C. Kearney. New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 505 Park Ave., 1953. Pp. 175.

\$3. This book is the result of a cooperative undertaking of the Educational Testing Service at Princeton, the U. S. Office of Education, the Department of Elementary School Principals of the NEA, and Russell Sage Foundation. The body of the book is largely concerned with a verbal description of overt behavior of children from the first to the ninth grades which may be legitimately set up as achievable standards for the *average* child. These standards are established through research in child study. While the book does not document its recommendations in the

volume itself, a companion report entitled "Supplement to the Report of the Mid-Century Committee on Outcomes in Elementary Education," in which the basic materials are fully presented, may be purchased from the Educational Testing Service, Princeton, N. J.

There is no question concerning the need for some standards by which schools can measure the effectiveness of their product, but one wonders if the establishment of these standards on a nation-wide level will not eventually legislate for mediocrity. Standards based on a statistical or mythical average must certainly ignore the tremendous importance of individual differences. There is also the grave danger that the standard will become the norm by which all children are measured, regardless of home conditions, maturation levels, socio-economic and acculturation factors, and so forth. The groups which undertook this project are to be commended for their fine efforts and obvious competence, but this reviewer wonders if the net effect will advance modern elementary education in the direction of that which will prove to be best for *all* children.—*Reviewed by* WILBUR A. YAUCH.

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Bulletins and Pamphlets

Editor, JAMES KNIGHT

SOCIAL STUDIES FOR OLDER CHILDREN. Programs for Grades Four, Five, and Six. *Edited by Loretta E. Klee. Washington, D. C.: National Council for Social Studies, NEA, 1201 - 16th St., N.W., 1953. Pp. 139. \$2.* This publication was developed

as an aid to teachers and others who are engaged in curriculum development of social studies in the middle grades. The forces that have been affecting changes in social studies programs are classified into three groups: (1) use of the scientific method, (2) philosophy of the child-centered school, and (3) the movement toward the community school.

The place of social studies in social education, the balance between the amount of emphasis to be given to child needs and societal needs, and the relation between problem-solving skills and the use of organized content are a few of the issues which are analyzed.

In planning social studies programs, consideration is given to the interests of eight- to ten-year-old children, their developmental tasks, individual differences, human relations in curricular experiences, and ways of evaluating pupil growth. It has this to say about sequence: "The only sequence which has ultimate value for children is one that is sequential to the learner at his stage of development."

Descriptions of social studies programs in six different schools will prove helpful to teachers who are trying to meet the real problems of living of boys and girls in the middle grades. These are supplemented by a list of recent books for children, travel bureau information, and other materials.—*Reviewed by CATHERINE STRIBLING, Division of Extension, University of Texas, Austin.*

PRINT IT RIGHT: How To Plan, Write, and Design School Public Relations Materials. *Washington, D. C.: National School Public Relations Association, NEA, 1201 - 16th St., N.W., 1953. Pp. 48. \$1.50.* For those who feel that printing should have a larger place in their school public relations programs, this bulletin tells how to aim it, plan it, write it,

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edit it, design it, distribute it, check its effectiveness, and still keep an eye on the budget. It is written for the whole range of school personnel and should be of interest also to lay members of school affiliated organizations. It is a guide to more effective printing and an illustration of it.

It offers suggestions pertaining to the usual school printed matter: reports, handbooks, programs, leaflets, campaign materials, and many others ranging from inserts for the reports to parents to milk bottle collars.

The style is easy; paragraphs are short; illustrations are apt; a dozen or more insets give pointed hints; and additional readings are listed in four compact little bibliographies. —J.K.

HELPING CHILDREN SOLVE PROBLEMS.

By Ruth Strang. Chicago: Science Research Associates, 57 W. Grand Ave., 1953. Pp. 48. 40¢. Children of all ages are continually faced with problems to be solved in the normal course of growing up. Some of these are simple ones which the child can solve for himself; others involve more complicated situations which require the help of some

adult. In this "Better Living Booklet" Miss Strang is most generous in her use of illustrations. She has chosen situations encountered daily by children from infancy through adolescence. Discussion is detailed enough to show who should assume the responsibility in each instance and how the particular concern might be dealt with by either the child, a parent, a teacher, or some community agency.

A six-step method to problem solving is presented which can be used by adults. The method can also be taught to children by utilizing the child's own problems for practice in the problem-solving process.

This is an excellent booklet for school personnel and should be doubly valuable to parents.—Reviewed by LOLA TULLOS, Division of Extension, University of Texas, Austin.

THE CONTROVERSIAL PROBLEM OF DISCIPLINE. By Katherine M. Wolf. New York: Child Study Association of America, 132 E. 74th St., 1953. Pp. 35. 30¢. This effort to clarify thinking about discipline for children covers the swing in popular thinking (Continued on page 98)

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Bulletins and Pamphlets

(Continued from page 97)

from exacting conformity over to extreme permissiveness and back again. It is a plea for discipline as something the growing child needs for his own protection.

The broader personality needs of children are discussed: the need of the child to express himself freely and be a person in his own right, and the conflicting need to escape the penalties of unrestrained expression of his aggressions. Presented also are the conflicting solutions of parents and educators who vent their own aggressions on children and are over-demanding, or who go to the other extreme. Both sides, for and against discipline, are outlined from the standpoints of (1) parents and teachers, (2) the child, (3) the goals of education.

The proposed solution involves seeing the difference between the child's wishes and his needs, recognizing that helping him to grow up does not mean molding him according to the adult's image, and that discipline need not be punishment. Each is elaborated and illustrated.—J.K.

THE ACQUISITION OF WORD MEANINGS. A Developmental Study. By Heinz Werner and Edith Kaplan. Evanston, Ill.: Society for Research in Child Development, Fayerweather Hall, East, Northwestern University, 1952. Pp. 120. Price not given. This monograph describes an experimental investigation of the ways children acquire word meanings through verbal concepts. A "word-context" test consisting of twelve series of six sentences each in which artificial words were imbedded was designed to get the responses of children. This test was so constructed that only one solution was possible for each series. Five age groups of children, twenty-five to the group, ages 9 through 13 were used as subjects.

The over-all purpose was to analyze the responses of children of different ages as they assign meaning to a word with reference to the context in which it occurs. Some fundamental aspects of language behavior emerged: how children come to comprehend a word as a lexical unit; how they have difficulty differentiating between words and sentences; how they struggle in transferring a word to a new context after it has acquired meaning in an



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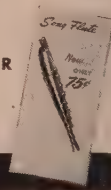
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individual sentence; how they fuse the qualities of words to get contradictory meanings from one context to another; how their variability in the interpretation of test sentences decreases as their language becomes conventionalized.

Each child was tested individually in four sessions of approximately one hour each, which furnished the opportunity to get a record of his responses and his rationalizations of them. Thus it was possible to illustrate each identified aspect of language development in the words of children. This is in welcome contrast to much of the language of the authors where precision of expression is gained through the use of such expressions as "holophrastic gradient," "pluralization," "syncretic concepts," or "fluid modification."

In the last section the findings of the investigation based on the word-context test are related to other studies of language development.

The thoughtful teacher will be well repaid for a serious study of this monograph. He will find it particularly rewarding if he does some experimentation with his own pupils to see how they attribute meaning to words.—J.K.

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Films Seen and Liked . . .

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Films

Primary

ON THE WAY TO SCHOOL. *Produced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. Educational collaborator: Viola The-man, associate professor of education, Northwestern Univ. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 11 min.* The story of a boy's adventures on the way to school: meeting the milkman, watching a garage being built, looking at a nest of robins, and watching a train go by.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

SAFETY IN WINTER. *Produced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. Educational collaborator: Vivian Weedon, curriculum consultant, Nat'l. Safety Council. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 11 min.* Children showing that being "weather-wise" in winter means being alert to seasonal dangers of fall-

ing, of traffic, of sickness; and the fun to be had by safe sledding, snowballing, and ice skating.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

SAFETY WITH EVERYDAY TOOLS. *Pro-duced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. Educational collaborator: Vivian Weedon, curriculum consultant, Nat'l. Safety Council. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 11 min.* A boy and a girl in an average day's activities are observed correctly using everyday tools; learning the use of three safety rules—keep tools neat, use the right tool, use tools correctly.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

THE WATER WE DRINK. *Produced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. Educational collaborator: John G. Read, professor of science, Boston Univ. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 11 min.* Jim and Bill learn how water is essential and why we should drink only clean, pure water. Shows the method by which water is purified in order to protect health and the importance of good water drinking habits.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

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MITTENS, THE KITTEN and PEPPY, THE PUPPY. *Produced by Coronet Films, 1952. Educational collaborator: Paul R. Wendt, associate professor of education, San Francisco State College. B & w, each \$50; color, \$100. 10 min. each.*

Mittens, the Kitten is a delightful story about a little girl and her kitten. Words such as *nursing, play, drink, and whiskers* are matched to scene defining their meaning. This technique will aid children in verbalizing their experiences with animals.

Peppy, the Puppy is the story of a boy and girl who select their own puppy. The vocabulary development is aided through spoken and printed word used simultaneously and repeated systematically. Care and responsibility of the pet are stressed.—*Southwest Film Review Center.*

Intermediate

HISTORY OF AVIATION. *Produced by Walt Disney; distributed by Association Films Inc., 347 Madison Ave., N. Y. 1952. Color, rent apply. 18 min. Beginning with the Wright Brothers, film brings development of the airplane almost to the present time. Car-*

toon type.—North Atlantic Film Review Center.

RULES AND LAWS. *Produced by Ritter, Young, Lerner Associates; distributed by Encyclopedia Britannica Films Inc., 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 1952. B & w, \$60. 14 min. Children playing indoors and out learn, with the understanding help of a father, why rules and laws are necessary and how we arrive at good ones. Also adult application.—North Atlantic Film Review Center.*

PEOPLE ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI. *Produced by Encyclopedia Britannica Films Inc., 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 1952. B & w, \$85; rent, \$4.50. 22 min. A small boy makes a boat and sends it down the Mississippi River from its source. The*
(Continued on page 102)

Editor's Note: These films and filmstrips were reviewed and recommended by a group of people in the film review center listed at the end of the review. All of the films are sound, 16 mm. Age classifications are broad and the person considering use will realize that the group of children and their interests determine use. i.e., *Adventure Into Teaching* might well be used with high school students. *The Toymaker* might be used with older intermediates studying prejudice.

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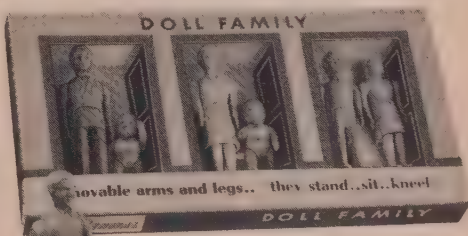
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Films Seen and Liked

(Continued from page 101)

adventures of the boat follow; children of different backgrounds and race find it and send it on. Around each incident is woven a bit of the story.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center.*

LAPLANDERS. *Produced by Encyclopedia Britannica Films Inc., 1150 Wilmette Ave., Wilmette, Ill. 1952. B & w, \$50. 11 min.* A happy, hardworking, self-respecting Lapp family breaks up its summer camp within the Arctic Circle and travels south for the winter. Shows how they travel, their reindeer herd, provision for winter.—*North Atlantic Film Review Center.*

ANCIENT EGYPT. *Produced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. B & w, \$50; color, \$100. 10 min.* The Sphinx, the Temple at Karnak, and many Egyptian sculptures are shown. Shows three spheres in which Egyptian civilization has contributed to Western culture—development of agriculture and community living, discoveries in the art and sciences, and evolution

of religion through their polytheism.—*South-east Film Review Center.*

MELODY IN MUSIC. *Produced by Coronet Films, Coronet Building, Chicago. 1952. Educational collaborator: Traugott Rohner, professor of music, Northwestern Univ. B & w, \$62.50; color, \$125. 13 min.* A group of students in an instrumental class are ready to begin studying a new piece of music. The teacher feels that they will play their individual parts with more understanding if they are first familiar with the new melody. This they hear, with discussion following as to the characteristics of melodies similar and different from that of the Brahms arrangement which they play at the last of the film.—*South-east Film Review Center.*

College and Adult

THE TOYMAKER. *Produced by Stevens-Rose Puppet Films; distributor, Athena Films Inc., 165 W. 46th St. N. Y. 1952. B & w, \$75; color, \$135. 16 min.* The toymaker introduces two puppets who are alike except one has stripes on his head and the other spots. At first they play happily together; when they discover their difference they be-

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come suspicious and build a wall between themselves. Suspicion leads to fear; fear to fighting. Eventually they discover the toy-maker and the fact that they are really all one.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

THE CHILD AT PLAY. *Produced by Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York. 1952. Educational collaborator: Virginia Axline, professor of education, Teachers College, Columbia University, N. Y. B & w, \$75. 18 min.* A three-year-old is shown in a play therapy room in three situations: playing alone, with a group of strange children, and with a little friend. Hidden cameras follow the spontaneous play, which is unrestrained by the therapist who is in the room but out of camera range.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

ADVENTURE INTO TEACHING. *Produced by Harmon Foundation Inc., 140 Nassau St., New York. 1952. Color, \$250; rental \$12 a day. 25 min.* Three high school seniors visit a city teachers college to find out about teaching as a possible profession. They sit in some classes at the college and go with college students on field trips and into elementary schools. Four phases of teacher education are shown: studying children; exploring materials and ways of working; putting ideas to work in student teaching; growing while teaching.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

Filmstrips

Intermediate and Junior High

PORT OF NEW YORK. *Produced by Life Magazine, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, N. Y. 1952. B & w, \$2.50. 76 frames. Silent.* Portrays the activities of the New York water front, showing the assembling of ships; imports and exports.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

YOUR DICTIONARY AND HOW TO USE IT. *Six filmstrips. Produced by Society for Visual Education Inc., 1345 W. Diversey Parkway, Chicago. 1952. Color, \$5 each; set, \$28.50. Silent.* Shows how to find words in dictionary, alphabetizing, definitions, pronunciation, vowels and consonants, syllables, word meanings. Titles of filmstrips are: *You Can Find Words Easily; Make Alphabetizing Work for You! First You Find It—Then De-*

fine It; Who's Mispronouncing; The Vowel, Backbone of a Syllable; Words and Their Ways.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLOBE. *Five filmstrips. Produced by Jam Handy, 2821 E. Grand Blvd., Detroit. 1952. B & w, \$4.20 each; set, \$19.50. Silent.*

Continents and Oceans (24 fr.) Excellent filmstrip about the continents and their relationship to the land and to climate. Gives a good concept of vastness and relationship of the parts of the world.

Night and Day (23 fr.) Careful development of the meaning and cause of night and day. Children do the experiments and the concept is made simple and delightful. Globe floating in space and its relation to sun is demonstrated by the use of a floor globe and a flashlight.

Hot and Cold Places (23 fr.) Excellent presentation of the hot and cold areas of the earth and the reason for the type of each kind. It is worked out in a simple manner showing the relationship of the sun to these areas.

North, South, East and West (23 fr.) Good filmstrip to help in the meaning of directions and how we use these terms in our daily living and in our interpretation of maps.

Up and Down (25 fr.) Story of the meaning of the terms, "up and down." Helpful strip to aid in the concept of directions and map reading.—*Great Plains Film Review Center.*

JAPAN. *Produced by Life Magazine, 9 Rockefeller Plaza, N. Y. 1952. B & w, \$2.50. 82 frames. Silent.* Some actual photographs taken at the Conference when the peace treaty was signed. Other pictures showing life and conditions in Japan at the present time.—*Southeast Film Review Center.*

College and Adult

MAKING TEACHING EFFECTIVE. *Produced by Teaching Aids Laboratory, Ohio State Univ., Columbus. 1952. B & w, \$2.25. 40 frames. Silent.* Filmstrip compares traditional teaching with what it calls "informal life-like learnings;" then suggests what some of these informal activities are and urges use of all kinds of audio-visual aids to help implement such education.—*Great Lakes Film Review Center.*

Over the Editor's Desk

Grouping in England

There wasn't room in the September issue to include all the interesting material so some was saved to use where it fit the topic of the month.

In connection with this month's topic on grouping, Marjorie Harbour writes:

"Primary schools in England are roughly equivalent to the first six grades in the American schools. In England, however, the primary school is divided into the *infant section* for boys and girls 5-7 years old, and the *junior section* for boys and girls 7-11 years old; usually each section has its own principal. Secondary education is given in three different types of schools. There are the *grammar schools* which cover an intensive academic course (admission being gained only by reaching a set standard in selective tests), the *technical schools* which specialize in industrial and commercial subjects, and the *modern schools* which offer a general and more practical curriculum. Coeducational secondary schools are much fewer in number than those which provide for boys and girls separately.

"Nearly all schools have some sort of school uniform, incorporating their own particular badges and colors. Uniforms, though often optional in the primary departments, are usually compulsory in the secondary departments, especially in grammar schools.

"Children here are supplied not only with textbooks (for which they pay no book rentals) but also all art and craft materials as well as pens, pencils, ink, rulers, paper, and notebooks. Children in England do nearly all their written work in exercise books, having a different book for each subject. In this way it is possible for teachers and parents to turn back over weeks of work and note how much progress has been made, and whether it has been steady or spasmodic.

"In England the schools of a whole town or district do not work to such a uniform plan as is the custom in some places. The head alone is responsible for making all the schemes of work for every subject in every age group—and no two schools are alike.

"There is still room for experiment. Only recently I heard of one such in some infant schools. Normally children are admitted every term at the age of five or just under and the

new admissions are grouped together in one class. In this particular area the five-year-old entrants were distributed evenly throughout every class in the school, so that over a period of two years every class averaging 40 children had boys and girls of every age between five and seven years. It seems that the older ones help the younger ones, thereby not only gaining confidence themselves, but also inspiring confidence in the almost-fives. This was described as 'family grouping,' and the districts which have adopted it consider it a worthwhile experiment."

Grouping in New Zealand

Una Wilson, Napier, New Zealand, writes:

"In New Zealand, the primary department is a unit of its own under the control of an infant mistress. In this unit pupils work at their own levels at their own speed until such times as they complete the necessary course. Brighter pupils, of course, will cover the ground more quickly and will not be held back until a promotion at the end of the year, whereas the duller pupils will take longer to complete the course."

Next Month

"How to Observe Children" is the topic for November with the editorial by Lawrence Frank.

"Each Child a Custom Job" by Helen Hefernan will cover her material given at the Study Conference in Denver. Edith Dowley discusses specific ways to observe and record the behavior of children. "Establishing Rapport" by Bill Bennett, Teachers College of Connecticut, New Britain, brings out the need for trust if understanding is to develop.

Evelyn Adlerblum of New York University has written about the ability to understand what children are saying. Walter B. Barbe shows how we can locate children with emotional problems.

The second section, prepared by Dora V. Smith, University of Minnesota, combines the topic "Regions of America Come Alive Through Children's Books" along with a bibliography of books about Minnesota that those looking forward to the ACEI Conference in St. Paul, will want to share.

News and reviews bring information on happenings and materials.

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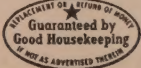
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